

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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61

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 MC-02 ACDA-19 GAC-01 IGA-02 RSR-01 OMB-01

/123 W

----- 009157

R 230857 Z MAR 73

FM AMCONSUL BOMBAY

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3713

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOMBAY 616

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR IN

SUBJ: CALL BY G. L. MEHTA

1. G. L. MEHTA, FORMER AMBASSADOR US AND MORE RECENTLY CHAIRMAN ICICI, HIGHLY RESPECTED ELDER STATESMAN BOMBAY AND FRIEND OF US ALTHOUGH HE LET HIS DISTRESS WITH US SHOW SOMEWHAT PAINFULLY DURING INDO- PAK CONFRONTATION, CALLED ON ME THIS MORNING HIS REQUEST. MAIN PURPOSE CALL WAS EXPRESS REGRET HE UNABLE SEE AMBASSADOR DURING HIS RECENT VISIT DELHI AND TO REITERATE HIS DESIRE HOLD SMALL LUNCHEON GCOR DINNER) FOR AMBASSADOR TO WHICH HE WOULD INVITE SEVERAL KEY INDUSTRIALISTS WHEN AMBASSADOR VISITS BOMBAY. ADDITIONAL ITEMS TOUCHED ON AS FOLLOWS:

2. MILITARY SALES PAKISTAN/ INDIA: INTERESTINGLY AND INDICATIVE OF WAY IN WHICH THIS SUBJECT BEING TREATED HERE, MEHTA DIDN' T DWELL ON THIS ONE AS HE WAS WONT TO DO IN PAST AND STRESSED ONLY THAT HE THOUGHT TIMING UNFORTUNATE FROM STAND-POINT AMBASSADOR AND THAT PERHAPS LIFTING AID SUSPENSION SHOULD HAVE PRECEDED MILITARY SALES ANNOUNCEMENT. HE DIDN' T TAKE ISSUE MY POINT BEST CLEAR DECK AT OUTSET. HE TOLD ME
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GOOD SOURCE HAD INFORMED HIM AMBASSADOR' S TALK WITH PM HAD GONE VERY WELL INDEED AND CONFIRMED OUT IMPRESSION THAT THIS HAD BEEN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN SETTING TONE FOR LOW KEY AND MUTED INDIAN OFFICIAL REACTION. MEHTA REGRETTEED OTHERWISE REASONABLE SWARAN SINGH HAD USED " PREVARICATE" COMMENTING THIS SUBJECT.

3. AMBASSADOR- DESIGNATE KAUL: SAID SOME WERE SHOCKED BY PM' S APPOINTMENT KAUL SINCE HE DID NOT HAVE REPUTATION BEING PARTICULARLY PRO- AMERICAN. WHILE APPARENT KAUL NOT MEHTA' S CHOICE FOR JOB, HE STRESSED KAUL DOES ENJOY PM' S CONFIDENCE AND THIS PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT AT THIS JUCOTURE. SAID HE HAD ONLY BEEN ABLE TO TALK TO KAUL BY TELEPHONE WHILE IN DELHI BUT THAT HE WOULD BE LUNCHING WITH HIM BOMBAY MAY 4 OR 5 AND WANTED ME ATTEND. MEHTA SAID HE ALSO ARRANGING IACC FUNCTION FOR KAUL SINCE QTE HE WANTED TRY AND SOFTEN HIM UP A LITTLE BEFORE HE GOES WASHINGTON UNQTE.

4. PAK POW' S: NOTED WHILE IN DELHI THAT HE TOGETHER WITH EDITOR ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY KHUSHWANT SINGH TOGETHER SEVERAL OTHERS HAD CALLED ON PM TO DISCUSS THIS ISSUE. COMMENTED ONLY THAT PM NOT VERY RESPONSIVE THEIR APPROACH FOR GREATER FLEXIBILITY ON INDIAN SIDE.

BANE

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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